

Paintings

John W. Hardy

62. 415
62. 417

GUARINO-WIDEN GALLERY
12309 Mayfield Rd.
Cleveland, Ohio

Among several young painters who provide a decided measure of virility in art in Cleveland and who stand as a champion for its future here is John W. Udvardy. The artist was awarded the Mary C. Page Scholarship at the time of his graduation from The Cleveland Institute of Art in 1958. He then travelled through Europe and North Africa where, in Morocco, he was struck by the rich architectural and textural patterning that abounds in that area. These influences have since played an important role in his art - particularly the collages. But they were never foreign to his nature for he comes from a Hungarian background and his temperament and the distant memory of embroideries and richly patterned materials assured his receptivity to such effects at a later date.

Inevitably a question intrudes: aren't such decorative qualities precisely what often serves as a target for criticism of much contemporary art? The answer is that "decorative" painting is not in itself bad. It has a long and honorable history and in a sense all painting is to some degree decorative. At times (in the art of Rubens, Tiepolo, Piero della Francesca, Gauguin, and many others) it achieves the greatest artistic heights. It is only when painting becomes exclusively and academically decorative, when it forgets its expressive, evocative, and poetical role that it invites criticism on this score.

Udvardy's art is eminently decorative, but this character takes on a positive value by virtue of its highly charged poetic content. One does not stroll unperturbedly by the painting titled, "Cardinal", for example, or "Catherine the Great", for whether one likes them or not, they will not be ignored.

Udvardy is still young and predictions are always dangerous, but even at this point he seems to understand a basic lesson: that technique is a means to an end and that beyond a certain point each artist must choose his own end and invent his own means.

EDWARD B. HENNING
Curator of Contemporary Art
Cleveland Museum of Art

We extend a cordial invitation to be our guest at a preview showing of John W. Udvardy's drawings and paintings on Sunday, June 16, 1963 - from 3 to 6 P.M.

Ross Widen
Sam Guarino

